

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY 2007–2008 ANNUAL REPORT



"The Conservancy is a very different organization, it equates economic well-being and environmental protection as coequals as part of its agenda."

Mike Chrisman
Secretary for Resources
SNC Board Chair

Foothill Farmers Market
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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Mike Chrisman
Secretary for Resources
SNC Board Chair

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For many of us, the creation of the SNC was the culmination of years of discussion and debate. Previous efforts, including legislation, had failed due to a variety of issues. In 2003, when Governor Schwarzenegger was elected to office he established the creation of the SNC as one of his top environmental goals.

In the months that followed, staff here at the Resources Agency worked tirelessly with Assemblymen Tim Leslie and John Laird and their staff to craft legislation in a way that would “work” for this remarkable Region. The result, Assembly Bill (AB) 2600, was signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger on September 23, 2004 at a ceremony near Colfax California.

This conservancy is different than others in a number of ways. It is charged with a mission based on the understanding that the environmental and economic well-being of the Region are closely linked. The SNC Governing Board (Board) has a strong local government representation with 6 of the 13 voting members being county supervisors. The 3 major federal land management organizations in the Region also have seats as non voting members.

As we have worked over the past 3 plus years to organize the agency and develop and implement its programs, we have learned a great deal about how we can best serve this important Region. In my opinion, one of the key lessons learned is that the somewhat different approach being taken with this organization is the right one.

The Board has worked closely with staff and a wide range of stakeholders to develop a [strategic plan](#) that clearly articulates a course for the next 5 years and identifies the actions necessary for us to be successful. The plan that we have is one that I am proud of and believe it provides a sound roadmap for the immediate future. That being said, we are committed to continuing to learn from our experiences and making adjustments as they are warranted and needed.

The development of grant guidelines and the implementation of the first year of Proposition 84 grants was a huge undertaking for a new organization. Through the hard work of the SNC staff, the organization was able to award nearly \$17 million in grants across the Region. I know I speak for all Boardmembers in expressing appreciation not only to the staff, but to the dozens of organizations that brought forward so many outstanding projects for our consideration.

The theme of this annual report is making a difference—a difference for the Region, for its communities and for its citizens. I can say without hesitation that during the short existence of the SNC, we have made a difference. I can further add with equal assurance that the best is yet to come!